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UNCLAS GUATEMALA 000708

SIPDIS

HARARE FOR BRUCE WHARTON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [IZ](#) [GT](#)

SUBJECT: PORTILLO PLEDGES UNCONDITIONAL SUPPORT IN  
DIFFICULT TIMES

1. (SBU) President Alfonso Portillo sent the Ambassador a letter (text below) on March 17 expressing consideration for the difficult situation facing the U.S. and offering Portillo's personal unconditional support for the Ambassador and Embassy staff. Written without explicit reference to Iraq, we interpret the letter to offer GOG cooperation to ensure the safety of U.S. mission employees in Guatemala, should it be necessary. SepTel discusses Portillo's conversation in which he told the Ambassador Guatemala would issue a specific statement of support on Iraq. In that conversation, Portillo said he had sent President Bush a letter similar to the March 17 letter to the Ambassador.

2. (U) Text of Letter: Dear Ambassador:

I am very aware of the difficult moment facing the world, and the heavy and historic responsibility that the United States of America has shouldered. We are all gravely concerned but we have faith in God that all will pass according to your plans.

As President of the Republic and as a citizen, I offer my services in any instance in which I can be useful. Above all I would like you to know that you will have my unconditional support for anything you or your staff require.

With faith in God, I hope we do not arrive at a situation of insecurity in Guatemala, but regardless, I pledge the unconditional support of my Government for you and your staff.

Sincerely,

Alfonso Portillo.

End Text.  
HAMILTON